

April 17, 2017, as World War I Remembrance Day. I encourage other communities in our great country to consider taking similar actions.

I have requested that a United States flag be flown over the Capitol to honor the life and legacy of those World War I veterans who trained in the Brazos Valley, and to honor the Brazos Valley World War I Centennial Committee.

As I close today, I ask that all Americans continue to pray for our country, for our military men and women who protect us from external threats, and for our first responders who protect us here at home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EMPEROR OF THE SWAMP

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, in Trump's "Cabinet of corruption," one individual stands head and shoulders above the rest. He is a man that Senator UDALL crowned "the Emperor of the Swamp."

If we created a Mount Rushmore of American corruption, his face would be carved into it. His scandals are so outrageous that even Sarah Sanders has stopped defending him and just started telling jokes at his expense.

I am speaking, of course, about EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

I will give you an example. Pruitt tried to use his office to get his wife a Chick-fil-A franchise. When he was questioned about it, the EPA chief said:

It is one of the best restaurants in the country. We need more of them in Tulsa and we need more of them across the country. Anyway, it is an exciting time.

Mr. Speaker, don't get me wrong, I enjoy a chicken sandwich just as much as any other person, but Scott Pruitt talks about Chick-fil-A like they are some kind of social service or some group that hands out food to the homeless. He thinks it is an organization setting up soup kitchens and homeless shelters.

Frankly, this is probably one of the weakest excuses I have ever heard from any administration, but this administration seems to specialize in weak excuses.

Scott also rented a Washington, D.C., apartment from a lobbyist with matters before the EPA. And it won't surprise you at all that he got a really good sweetheart deal. Pruitt was paying \$50 a night and was only charged the days he actually slept there.

Now, for everybody back in Arizona who may not understand this, the D.C. rental market is really high here. Let just assure you, what he did was not normal and probably illegal. I am not a lawyer or a law enforcement officer, but this arrangement definitely looks like a bribe to me.

And that is not all. This week, we learned that Pruitt ordered his government bodyguards to seek out a luxury moisturizer that is exclusively offered to patrons of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU), my friend and colleague.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GALLEGO for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, what Congressman GALLEGO didn't say is, first of all, both of us are veterans, and we serve on Active Duty in the United States military because we believe in this country, we believe in America, we believe we are an exceptional nation.

But Scott Pruitt has made a joke of Federal service. He is under 12 investigations. He has wasted taxpayers' money, he has used taxpayers' money to enrich himself, and he has used taxpayers' money to help his wife.

Based on what Congressman GALLEGO said about this lotion thing, he had his personal security detail, paid for at taxpayer expense, drive around to Ritz-Carltons to try to find lotion. That is why I have a picture here of the Ritz-Carlton lotion.

There is also this thing, by the way, known as the internet. You can just go on the internet and search for Ritz-Carlton lotion. The first link will take you to the Ritz-Carlton shops, and he could have just ordered it without using his taxpayer-funded staff to drive around to find this lotion. This is just an example of the joke he has made of Federal service.

Mr. GALLEGO and I are going to break down for the American people today the top 10 scandals of EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, before we go into the top 10, I think one of the pretty scandalous other abuses of taxpayers is the fact that he had his personal detail asking and searching for used Trump mattresses.

Now, this is not a joke, this is not from an episode of "Veep." Your EPA Administrator, a supposed adult in the room, is using taxpayer dollars to try to find used Trump mattresses.

Right now, all I can think of are two things. Number one, this person is just egregiously using our taxpayer dollars in the worst possible manner. And, number two, he is trying to set up one of the weirdest bed and breakfasts in the history of Washington, D.C.

But this is actually real. This is not TV. This is actually happening in your government.

Mr. Speaker, let me go into the top 10 things that EPA Administrator Pruitt has done to embarrass this country, and possible corruption. And 10 is what we have. There are a lot more than that, but we have to at least keep this somewhat biteable for everybody else.

Let me start with number 10, as recently reported: the mess hall. Pruitt has overused his privileges at the swanky, but affordable, White House mess hall, despite being warned against doing so.

Now, the mess hall is basically a cafeteria for the top officers of the White House. I have been in it. I was there under the Obama administration. It is an honor to be invited to go, and it is great food at a very low price.

Pruitt has misused this privilege so much so that he has been asked to not come back. You are that egregious that, as a sitting member of the Cabinet, you have been told by White House staff to not come back to the cafeteria. That tells you a lot.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU) to tell us about number nine.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, number nine is the dinner reservation. It was publicly reported that EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt asked the security detail to turn on lights and sirens so that they could drive him down the crowded traffic streets of Washington, D.C., and get him to dinner at Le Diplomate restaurant.

That is an abuse of taxpayer funds, and that is not what sirens are for. They are for actual emergencies, not to make sure that a Trump Cabinet official can make his dinner reservation on time.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I also recommend just taking the Metro. It is much quicker, but that is just me.

Number eight, \$130 fountain pens: Scott Pruitt has spent over \$1,500 taxpayer dollars on personalized \$130 fountain pens. Now, I recommend the BIC pen. It does the job well.

But, more importantly, it seems like, on one hand, he doesn't seem to mind spending taxpayer dollars on really expensive things, such as these really fancy pens, and then personally, in his own personal life, he is really cheap by looking for cheap used Trump mattresses. So he is, essentially, using the taxpayer dollar as his personal piggy bank so he can live the lifestyle he wants.

On to the mattress. Pruitt used his EPA staff to help him look for a discount Trump Home Luxury Plush Euro Pillow Top mattress. It is apparently his favorite.

He also inappropriately used aids to look for apartments and help arrange family vacations to the Rose Bowl.

TED and I are lucky to have some very smart, young staff, and they work hard, but they are not here to be our personal valets. They are here to make sure we do our job well, we get to our meetings, and we have the resources that we need to make the right decisions.

They certainly aren't there to help you find the right type of Trump Home Luxury Plush Euro Pillow Top mattress. I definitely don't recommend that. Or, as TED LIEU has said, there is the internet. You can find it there also.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU).

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, number six is the lotion, which we have already talked about. But what we didn't talk about is, in

using his security detail, you should know, this is a really expensive security detail 24/7. They have already spent \$3.5 million on that security detail in 2017.

□ 1300

This is, again, just a waste of taxpayer funds. No other Cabinet official has this kind of security, and it is something that we really should look at if we had a functioning GOP House oversight structure.

Unfortunately, the majority here in the House has refused to look at EPA's Scott Pruitt scandals, and I don't even know how they can defend him at this point.

Mr. GALLEG0. Number five, first class travel: Pruitt has spent over \$100,000 on first class commercial travel since entering office, citing security concerns, apparently not satisfied with his \$3.5 million currently spent on security escort.

Let me tell you, number one, unfortunately for, I think, many Americans, nobody knows who Scott Pruitt is. You do not need to be flying first class for, quote/unquote, security reasons, and you certainly should not be making the American public be paying for your first class tickets.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Number four, the \$43,000 soundproof phone booth: So EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is so paranoid that he wasted \$43,000 of your taxpayers' money to build a soundproof phone booth for him to make phone calls.

So if the President doesn't want to fire EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt for his corruption, I think the President should just fire him for being super weird, right? You have got Scott Pruitt using a security detail to get location at the Ritz-Carlton, to have his staff trying to find used Trump Hotel mattresses, and he has built this private phone booth. That is just creepy and strange.

Mr. GALLEG0. Number three, unsanctioned raises: In a time in America where every American is hoping to just get a pay raise next month, Scott Pruitt was told: You are not allowed to give your employees—the certain employees that he wanted to give—a pay raise.

He was specifically told: They do not deserve that pay raise. You will not give them a pay raise.

So instead, he used an obscure provision of the Safe Drinking Water Act to actually find a way to give them a pay raise in spite of the White House saying: You will not give them a pay raise.

Now, this would be actually somewhat okay, in my opinion, if he was actually trying to protect safe drinking water, but, in fact, he is not doing that. He is actually only using the fund to pay for these increases for his well-connected friends and get them higher pay.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Number two is the sweetheart condo deal with lobbyists.

So Scott Pruitt got this deal with lobbyists that no ordinary American could have gotten. It was a \$50-a-night deal on a condo in Washington, D.C., near the Capitol, and market rates were much higher than \$50 a night.

But in addition, he structured a lease so he only had to pay for the nights that he was there. So many nights that he wasn't there, the landlord just had to eat those costs. That is not a lease that any normal American could have gotten.

The reason that Scott Pruitt got this is because he was dealing with these lobbyists, who also lobbied on issues before him. This is what most people would call corruption.

And before we go to the last one, which is about the Chick-fil-A restaurant, I just want to say the fact that Chick-fil-A—I can't even say this without laughing. Maybe RUBEN GALLEG0 can talk about this with a straight face.

Mr. GALLEG0. Look, you have an EPA Administrator who is literally using his staff to go track down and try to speak to the CEO of Chick-fil-A to try to get a very hard-to-get franchise, essentially using his public office to put pressure on them to get a very, very hard-to-get and lucrative franchise.

In any world, if we had just told you that this was being done by 1 or 2 or even 10 people, this all would not just be really, really, really weird, but really, really, really corrupt.

But the fact that there is one person that is doing this, and consistently doing this, and has not been fired by the man who said he enjoys firing people, by the man who had a show for so many years about firing people, and yet for some reason, he cannot find a reason to fire this weird, corrupt EPA Administrator, that is the problem here.

You have a corrupt Cabinet official and you have a Presidency that will not keep him in check.

I yield to my good friend, TED LIEU, to close.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Again, Congressman GALLEG0 and I served on Active Duty in the military. We are veterans. We believe in this country. That is why we are up here.

Some of the things we said today may have sounded funny, because we are trying to point out the absurdity of why EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is still in office.

Scott Pruitt has wasted taxpayer funds, he has abused taxpayer funds for his personal profit, he has abused his relationship with lobbyists to personally profit, he has also abused his relationships to help his family profit.

Scott Pruitt, at the end of the day, is not just an embarrassment to us, he is an embarrassment to the Republicans in this House, to the Democrats in this House, to the Trump Cabinet, and to the United States of America.

Scott Pruitt has to go.

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative LIEU for his comments during this Special Order.

To finish, we had a President who said he was going to come and drain the swamp. Scott Pruitt is the swamp. He is the biggest swamp monster there is right now when it comes to the culture of corruption here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SHOULD BECOME THE 51ST STATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this time on the floor to speak about making the District of Columbia the 51st State.

I am not going to simply glow about how important that would be for my district, because we have found that most Americans believe we already have the same rights they do.

I want to describe one of the oldest cities in the United States, a city that is bigger than two States, that is to say, has more residents than two States, more residents than Vermont, more residents than Wyoming, and about as many residents as seven States of the Union.

The people I represent, 700,000 of them, are number one in taxes paid to support the Government of the United States, yet they have no representation whatsoever in that body down the hall, the Senate of the United States.

In fact, I am grateful that the House understands that I should vote in committee, where most of the work is done, but when a bill comes to the House floor, even if that bill singularly affects the residents of the District of Columbia, every Member of this body, except the Member who represents the District of Columbia, can vote on that bill.

That is not justice, that is un-American, and it offers strong evidence, I think, of the underlying reasons why the District of Columbia should become the 51st State of the Union.

We are making progress. We have got almost all the Democrats on our statehood bill. And if there is Democratic control of the next Congress, I will seek a vote on D.C. statehood on the House floor.

I got a vote on D.C. statehood when I first came to the Congress. It is time to have another vote on D.C. statehood.

We have more than half of the Democrats in the Senate, and I will get all the Democrats in the House and all the Democrats in the Senate before the end of the 115th Congress.

Most Members of the House come to this place knowing little about the Capital City. I don't blame them. I don't see why they should know much about it, except that it is the tourist mecca of our country; that 30 million